

LaRae at Turtle Mountain Community College Choosing Health Opportunities for Indian Career Enhancement (Project CHOICE)

LaRae Schindler is a full-time nursing student at Turtle Mountain Community College. She is also a first-time mother. She finds it can be difficult being a full-time college student on top of being a first-time mother but says, "I am managing to juggle it all. I am making it work with the help of Project CHOICE," a Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) program from the Office of Family Assistance.

LaRae has significant challenges in pursuing her education while managing so many other responsibilities. As a 28-year-old adult, she lives with her baby and her husband, and the family has bills, such as rent, car payments, insurance payments, day care, etc.

Project CHOICE has assisted her in many ways. The project pays LaRae's tuition and book fees, so "that is one less worry I have," she says. The project also pays for her uniform, required for clinicals, and for her mileage, which she calls "a blessing."

In addition, Project CHOICE pays a set amount per month toward her child care expenses. It will also pay the fees when she goes to take her national board examination.

LaRae says, "The Project CHOICE staff are there for us any time we need them, answering questions, encouraging us, and offering us advice. If I were not a Project CHOICE student, I am unsure if I would still be able to be a full-time college student. Sometimes all the juggling can be stressful. However, I know the payoff in the end will become even greater. This is a temporary situation which points towards a better and brighter future. I have always believed that the things you work for in life are the things you value the most (such as my education). I would like to thank Project CHOICE for giving me a chance to succeed in my own story."